



THE ASSOCIATE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON

JUL 02 2008

Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretaries  
Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: James E. Cason *James E. Cason*  
Associate Deputy Secretary

Subject: 2008 Department of the Interior Environmental Achievement Awards -  
Call for Nominations **(Response Due: August 27, 2008)**

I am pleased to invite nominations for the 2008 Department of the Interior Environmental Achievement Awards. These Awards recognize employees and teams as well as cooperators (contractors or outside partners) who have attained exceptional environmental achievements under Executive Order 13423, *Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management*; Departmental Manual policy - *Compliance with Waste Management Requirements* (518 DM 2); *the Energy Policy Act of 2007*; and *the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007*.

Generally, the Department Award categories mirror those of the White House Closing the Circle Awards administered by the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive. The Department Awards include an additional category, Environmental Stewardship, which recognizes hazardous waste remediation accomplishments. Additionally, the Sustainable Design/Green Building category now includes energy efficiency, water conservation, and renewable energy accomplishments. Only the Department Award recipients and honorable mentions recommended by the award selection panel are eligible for the 2008 White House Closing the Circle Awards.

The Department Environmental Achievement Awards categories are:

- Waste / Pollution Prevention and Recycling
- Green Purchasing
- Environmental Management Systems
- Sustainable Buildings
- Alternative Fuel and Fuel Conservation in Transportation
- Environmental Stewardship

Bureau/office Directors must submit nominations to Mr. Willie R. Taylor, Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance by **August 8, 2008**. Compliance with all applicable environmental laws and regulations is a requirement for receiving an award. Descriptions of the Award categories, nomination process, and evaluation criteria are included in the attachment. Questions may be addressed to Ms. Catherine Cesnik, Awards Coordinator, at 202-208-7554 or <Catherine\_Cesnik@ios.doi.gov>.

Please visit the *Greening Interior* website, <http://www.doi.gov/greening/> to find an electronic copy of the attachment, view additional information about this and other environmental awards, and a link to the Department Environmental Achievement Awards on-line nomination submission site.

I encourage you to submit nominations for the 2008 Department Environmental Achievement Awards and look forward to recognizing your outstanding bureau/office environmental program.

Attachment

cc: Deputy Secretary  
Chief of Staff  
Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and International Affairs

**Evaluation Criteria and Award Categories**  
**2008 Department of the Interior Environmental Achievement Awards**

[www.doi.gov/greening/awards](http://www.doi.gov/greening/awards)

**AWARDS TYPES**

Individual - a Department employee

Team - Department employee or a combination of Department and non-Department employees

Cooperator - a Department partner organization, which may be a contractor, a Federal/State agency, tribal nations or organizations, or non-profit entities.

**AWARDS SCOPE**

The Department Environmental Achievement Awards recognize Department individual employees and teams as well as Department cooperators who have attained exceptional environmental achievements in accordance with the following policies:

- Executive Order 13423 - Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management,
- Departmental Manual - Compliance with Waste Management Requirements (518 DM 2),
- Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58),
- Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140),
- Strategic Plan for Greening the Department of the Interior Through Waste Prevention, Recycling and Federal Acquisition, and
- Additionally, the Environmental Stewardship category recognizes efforts to prevent and remediate contaminated sites on Department land.

The Department Environmental Achievement Awards provide recognition for Department employees and cooperators for exceptional work done on Department projects.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

These Awards recognize recipients and projects worthy of replication across the Department. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations is a requirement for receiving an Award. There must be no environmental compliance problems (e.g., Environmental Protection Agency or State fines and penalties levied against a facility or open environmental audit findings) associated with a nomination. Therefore, bureau/office heads are required to verify that all recommended award recipients are in compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations or that all compliance-related problems have been addressed. By signing the Memorandum of Nomination, bureau/office heads are certifying that environmental compliance findings associated with the submitted nominations are closed or that all compliance-related problems have been sufficiently addressed to their satisfaction. The Department reserves the right to withhold recognition from any recommended recipient in violation of any environmental Federal, State or local rules, laws, or regulations of any kind.

## **AWARDS CATEGORIES**

### **Waste/Pollution Prevention and Recycling**

This category recognizes source reduction practices related to the generation of non-hazardous solid wastes, hazardous wastes, or pollution from a site, facility, or operation through any change in the design, manufacturing, or use/reuse of materials or products; and/or the amount of toxicity in waste materials before recycling, reuse, treatment or disposal. This category also recognizes recycling activities - including collection, separation, and processing - by which products or other materials are recovered from the waste stream for use in the manufacture of new products (other than use as fuel for producing heat or power by combustion) at a Federal site, facility, or operation. This category also recognizes electronics life-cycle management programs, including electronics recycling. Preference is given to nominations that include outreach programs/projects or educational efforts designed to promote pollution prevention and waste prevention goals and objectives of E.O. 13423; promote recycling at the site, facility, or operation; and promote partnerships with the surrounding community to promote recycling.

### **Green Purchasing**

This category recognizes the most effective and innovative programs implemented for purchase and use of recycled content, environmentally preferable, or biobased products at a Federal site, facility, or operation. Preference is given to nominations that include both purchase of recycled content products and purchase of either environmentally preferable or biobased products. For recycled content products, this award category focuses on, but is not limited to, those products designated in the Environmental Protection Agency's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines. For environmentally preferable products, this Award category recognizes the best examples of acquiring, using, or validating products or services that have a reduced impact on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose; an outstanding improvement to a process that resulted in significant monetary savings and benefit to the environment; or product testing that led to the approval and use of environmentally preferable products or services. Preference also is given for outreach programs/projects or educational efforts designed to promote the green purchasing objectives of E.O. 13423.

### **Sustainable Buildings**

This category recognizes the most innovative Federal Government sustainable design and green building projects, the conservation and efficient use of energy and water, and the use of renewable energy sources. Nominations are limited to completed projects. Nominations should address all facets of a structure/project's life cycle (i.e. encompass project design, energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy use, materials usage, and building operations). For Sustainable Design/Green Buildings, each nomination should highlight the cost effective use of innovative techniques and solutions that utilize sustainable design principles in the planning, construction, and operation of Federal facilities. For energy and water conservation projects,

each nomination should include the amount of energy and or water saved as a result of the project, in terms of both the absolute quantity and percentage when compared to the previous fiscal year. For renewable energy projects, each nomination should include the amount of renewable energy produced or purchased as a result of the project, in terms of both absolute quantity and percentage when compared to the previous fiscal year. Each nomination should include the magnitude of environmental and/or non-energy benefits derived from the project, such as metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions averted. Preference is given to projects that include outreach programs/projects or educational efforts designed to promote sustainable buildings, energy and water conservation and renewable energy use.

### **Alternative Fuel and Fuel Conservation in Transportation**

This category recognizes programs, practices, and procedures implemented in a Federal fleet that result in significant alternative fuel use and fuel conservation measures in transportation. This includes establishment of new fuel infrastructure; methods for encouraging the use of alternative fuels; ride sharing programs; increased vehicle usage efficiency programs; hybrid vehicle or neighborhood electric vehicle acquisition and use; or any other methods your fleet uses to decrease petroleum consumption. Preference is given to nominations that demonstrate innovation in response to technical, logistical, financial, and other hurdles and support the goals of the Energy Policy Act of 2007, Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, and E.O.13423.

### **Environmental Management Systems**

This category recognizes the most effective and innovative programs to implement environmental management systems at the Department facilities in accordance with E.O. 13423. Implementation of organizational/facility-level environmental management systems shall include measurable environmental goals, objectives, and targets that are reviewed and updated as appropriate. The systems should include a compliance component. This category also recognizes the use of quantitative or qualitative consideration of the full range (cradle to grave) of environmental costs and impacts of certain activities or procurement. The effort should include environmental consideration in either descriptive or accounting format of raw material derivations, use and disposal of final products services; material and energy usage and waste; environmental, health and safety management costs; or the use of environmental accounting and life cycle assessment in multiple types of decision making. Preference is given to Environmental Management Systems programs that go beyond the basic compliance under E.O. 13423 and include greening goals consistent with E.O. 13423 and the Federal Electronics Challenge.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

This category recognizes efforts to prevent and remediate contaminated sites on Department land. Examples of such improvements or initiatives are in areas such as bureau operations, land management practices, technology enhancement/transfer, environmental education/training, policy making, program infrastructure development, and research. **Note:** this category changed

in 2007. It no longer covers far-reaching ecosystem protection accomplishments, which are recognized through the Department Cooperative Conservation Awards. If you have any questions about whether or not your project will fit this category, please contact Ms. Catherine Cesnik, Awards Coordinator, at 202-208-7554 who will review questions on a case-by-case basis.

## **AWARD PROCESS**

### **Step 1: SUBMIT NOMINATIONS ON-LINE: at: [www.doi.gov/greening/awards](http://www.doi.gov/greening/awards)**

Your bureau/office may attach additional guidelines for the submission of nominations within your organization. Please follow your bureau/office directions and deadlines. (Electronic submissions will be accepted on compact disk from organizations without access to the Internet. Contact Ms. Catherine Cesnik at 202-208-7554 for details.)

**Step 2: BUREAU/OFFICE SCREENING:** Bureau/office award coordinators, in coordination with environmental management staff, will have access to on-line submissions to screen nominations for completeness, merit, appropriateness for the Environmental Achievement Awards, and for environmental compliance as outlined below. Bureaus/offices are asked to forward only their seven best nominations. **Note:** “Cooperators” must be nominated by their partner bureau/office for work done on a Department project.

**Step 3: MEMORANDUM FROM HEAD OF BUREAU/OFFICE:** Bureau/office heads sign a Memorandum of Nomination to forward their seven best nominations to Mr. Willie R. Taylor, Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance by **August 1, 2008**. Please contact your bureau award coordinator to ensure your project will be included on this memorandum, or it cannot be considered for an Environmental Achievement Award. Also, please note, by their signature in the Memorandum of Nomination, bureau/office heads convey that the submitted projects have good environmental compliance standing as outlined below in Step 5.

**Step 4: EVALUATION OF NOMINATIONS BY AWARDS PANEL:** The Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance convenes a panel of representatives from bureaus/offices to select and recommend nominations for awards using the established evaluation criteria.

**Step 5: ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE SCREENING:** The Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance confirms that recommended facilities and projects are in compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations.

**Step 6: RECOMMENDATIONS FINALIZED, ANNOUNCEMENT MADE:** The Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance forwards recommendations to Department’s Agency Environmental Executive, who finalizes selection of recipients and signs a memorandum announcing Award recipients.

**Step 7: RECOGNITION CEREMONY:** The Awards ceremony and luncheon are tentatively scheduled for October 2008, in Washington, DC. Recognition includes an award presented by a high-level Department official, a display in the Interior Museum Department Environmental Achievement Awards case, an article in *People, Land and Water*, and a page on the Greening Department website. Recipients and honorable mentions become a part of a network of environmental professionals who help spread best management practices across Department. Bureaus/offices are responsible for travel costs for their award recipients.

## **TIPS FOR WRITING A GOOD NOMINATION**

The following are tips suggested by past judges.

**Tip 1:** Review the summaries of the past award recipients at [www.doi.gov/greening/awards](http://www.doi.gov/greening/awards).

**Tip 2:** Use headings and bullets to separate important components of your narrative.

**Tip 3:** If your project was a team effort, don't nominate a single individual. In the past, judges have raised questions about nominations that single out an individual, without a clear justification why that individual deserves sole recognition.

**Tip 4:** If your project falls in more than one award category, write only one nomination that demonstrates the full scope of your program, and select the closest award category.

**Tip 5:** If your project encompasses more than one bureau/office, write one joint nomination that demonstrates the full scope of the program. Select a lead bureau/office to write and submit the nomination. Please list all member bureaus, offices, or agencies in your nomination narrative.

**Tip 6:** Use quantitative data whenever possible (e.g., square feet of recycled-content carpet, pounds of waste diverted from the landfill, dollar values of green contracts, etc.).

**Tip 7:** Submit a very succinct and very informative abstract of the achievement to show judges your program's key components. Your abstract helps judges quickly reference salient points of your project's merits during discussions around the selection committee table.

**Tip 8:** Closely read the evaluation criteria that will be used by judges to score your nomination.

**Tip 9 (For Cooperators):** Clearly show your organization's relationship to the Department project and to Department as a whole. Explain your organization's role in the project.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

A panel of bureau/office representatives convened by the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance will review and recommend Award recipients using the following four criteria.

For projects that won an Environmental Achievement Award in years past, the nomination submitted this year must demonstrate significant new developments or improvements over past achievements.

### **Criteria 1: Need & Implementation**

- A clear, compelling environmental need for the project
- Challenges overcome to complete the project or action
- Support for Federal/Department/bureau/office initiatives, such as: environmental initiatives, streamlined procedures, sound life-cycle cost accounting, and performance measures
- Department and third-party audits to improve project performance
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, Executive Orders, tribal codes and ordinances, and departmental and bureau policies were followed
- Achievement of a recognized benchmark of environmental performance may have been demonstrated by third party certification, for example: the International Standards Organization 14000 series, National Environmental Performance Track, or Green Seal product or service standards.

### **Criteria 2: Innovation**

- Extent to which the project incorporates innovative and emerging techniques or technologies
- Project finds solutions to a common problem(s) faced across the Department

### **Criteria 3: Partnering and Cooperative Conservation**

- Project is exemplary in applying the E.O. 13352, "Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation." For example, project leaders succeeded in bringing together parties with differing resources and perspectives to share cooperatively in the work of the project and/or created sustaining relationships with your bureau/office that will further the parties' involvement in stewardship of public lands.
- Critical project information, including rationale and results, were communicated in a variety of ways to multiple communities or stakeholders affected by or interested in the project or action, such as tribal communities, citizen organizations, townships, etc. (e.g. informative publications may have been translated into other languages for use by the public).

**Criteria 4: Scope of Project Impact**

- Completed project contributed significantly to the improvement of the environment
- Other Department sites or Federal entities could replicate the strategies and techniques proven successful by this project
- The project is institutionalized into business practices to provide continuing and accruing benefits to your bureau/office
- Quantitative data shows improved performance over past years
- The project must be complete or show several years of data/results.

**QUESTIONS AND OFF-INTERNET SUBMISSIONS**

If you have any questions that cannot be answered by your bureau/office environmental award coordinator, please contact Ms. Catherine Cesnik, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance, at 202-208-7554 or <Catherine\_Cesnik@ios.doi.gov>.

If you do not have internet access, you may submit your nomination on a compact disk. Contact your award coordinator or Ms. Catherine Cesnik for more information.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD COORDINATORS**

May 2008

<b>Bureau/Office</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Telephone or FAX</b>	<b>Email or Mailing Address</b>
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